THE HENRY F. HALL BUILDING

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

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Sir George Williams University

Montreal, Quebec

In 1956, Sir George Williams University moved into its own Kenneth E. Norris building on Drummond Street, and was able to concentrate all its activities in this building and in the adjacent Y.M.C.A.

A few years later a sixth floor was added to the Norris building to house the Library but by 1961-1962, because of heavy enrollment, space ran out and the University had to rent space in an apartment-office building at the north east corner of Drummond and Burnside Street; part of the second and third floor of this "Annex" was rented and every year since, some more space has been added.

In spite of the good planning of the Norris building, it was becoming apparent that the tremendous growth of the student enrollment and the development of the scope of the academic program was forcing the University to add substantial amounts of new space.

The Norris building was not only too small in size but it also lacked many of the facilities that are now needed to implement a more complete academic program; an Engineering Faculty was instituted, honours courses in many fields were added to the curriculum; furthermore, graduate work and research is being planned and the Library must increase its holdings.

A new building was required and planning was organized. The perplexing problem was to find out how all these facilities could fit in only two buildings, the Norris building and the proposed Hall building, located in the heart of the city of Montreal: a university capable of enrolling 5,000 day students and 10,000 evening students usually requires an extended campus.

Therefore, a study was conducted in the possibility of moving the University away from the center of the city, but after serious consideration by the Board of Governors, such a move was found to be incompatible with the aims of the institution.

It was evident from the start that this new downtown building would show a radical departure from the conventional university building. The members of the Board of Governors, the Faculty and the Administration planned the building: an inventory of space requirements showing the size and relationship of every room, department by department, was first compiled and the architects designed the building from the inside out.

The Henry F. Hall building is the expression of the ideas of many but because the planning was systematic and well co-ordinated the sum of all the parts forms a logical and pleasing whole.

The following table, showing day enrollment and space in square feet for the 1956-1966 decade, gives a measure of the growth of the institution and the efforts made to meet the demand.

Year	Day Enrollment	Evening Enrollment	Space	Area sq.ft.	Total Area
1956-57	1090	4284	- Norris building	110,500	
			& Y.M.C.A.	33,000	143,500
1959-60	1586	4665	- Library (6th floor)	19,500	163,000
1961-62	2077	6285	- 2nd & 3rd floor Annex	17,000	180,000
1962-63	2457	6382	- 4th floor Annex	8,500	188,500
1963-64	3050	7598	- 5th floor Annex	8,500	197,000
1964-65	3490	8000	- 6th floor Annex &	11,600	
			lightwell	2,400	211,000
1966-67	4000	10000	- Henry F. Hall bldg.	782,700	956,700*

* When the Hall building will be in use, the Annex space will not be needed.

Details of the Henry F. Hall building

1. Location

Burnside Street, from Bishop to Mackay Street, extending north about 280 feet towards Sherbrooke Street. This location has been selected for its accessibility, particularly to evening students, and because it can be integrated with existing facilities.

2. Opening Date

Construction started in April 1964 and the building should be ready for occupancy by September 1966.

3. Architects and Contractor

The architects are Ross, Fish, Duschenes & Barrett of Montreal; Consulting Engineers, J.P. Keith and Associates, and the General Contractor is Perini Quebec Inc.

4. Cost and Financing

The construction cost including equipment for this imposing building is estimated at $ 23,900,000. To meet the cost, the government of the Province of Quebec is contributing $ 15,850,000, the Canada Council $ 700,000 and other government grants total $ 350,000. To balance, a public campaign is now proceeding for $ 7,000,000 and indications are that the goal will be reached.

5. Basic Features of Design

Ten floors is the maximum height for efficiency in a University building because of the large number of students moving when classes change.

Vertical transportation is taken care of by a set of escalators, two passenger elevators and a freight elevator.

The building is entirely air-conditioned; so that maximum efficiency is assured, particularly for the summer term.

The building is in the shape of a cube, this makes for the best use of downtown land, minimizes distances within the building and is economical to construct.

This proposed building will be used in conjunction with the present University building; facilities will be divided between the two buildings.

6. Capacity of Buildings

The University's expansion plans are based on an expected enrollment of 5,000 day students and 10,000 evening students by 1970. The present enrollment is : Day Division - ~~2455~~;3050 Evening Division - ~~6359~~; summer (1964 Evening Division only) - 2554. The new building will allow 4,000 day students to be accommodated immediately, and all of the laboratory, cafeteria, and other facilities of a fixed nature are designed for the ultimate enrollment of 5,000 day and 10,000 evening students. The University will be able to develop the scope of its academic program, extend the present three-year Engineering Certificate course to a five-year degree program, and introduce graduate work.

7. Principal Features of the New Building

In order to lighten the appearance of the building, the outside columns on three sides from the main floor to the second mezzanine were recessed by about ten feet and this lower portion glassed in. The exterior treatment of the upper walls also received major consideration: looking for a material that would be both economical and yet different from the usual glass - metal curtain wall (a finish that would make the building look like a bank), the architects suggested a pre-cast concrete window unit and frame made of highly concentrated white concrete with shapes and indentations giving a considerable amount of texture. This type of concrete, manufactured by Shockbeton, has been used successfully in other Canadian universities and gives a certain amount of academic atmosphere.

Some of the most interesting features are the facilities that will be available to assist the teacher. For example, an extensive study was made of classroom design to consider means of improving efficiency, comfort and aesthetics. This is done by providing proper air-conditioning, acoustics, lighting and audio-visual aids in a properly shaped room. In many auditoria and classrooms, rear view projection techniques will be used. A booth equipped with projectors for cinema, slides and TV will be located behind the front wall of the room (behind the usual black-board) and projecting on the rear of a translucid screen. The main advantage of this system is that there is no need to darken the room, sufficient light remains during viewing for the student to write. The entire operation is by remote control at the instructors desk. For example on pushing the slide projection button, the lights in the room dim slightly to a predetermined level and the screen is illuminated by the desired slide. For instructors who desire more conventional methods, a black-board will be provided, as well as an overhead projector.

Many classrooms will be linked together by closed circuit TV, the program originating from a television studio in the Communication Center, located in the sub-basement close to a small but complete theater. This theater, designed by professionals in the field, will be equipped with the most up-to-date facilities; again, thorough studies of acoustics, lighting and viewing were done so that production will be capable of reaching professional standards.

Besides the usual Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Engineering laboratories, the building will also house a Computer Center, Psychology and Sociology laboratories, a Language laboratory and Fine Arts studios. The Chemistry laboratories required a special study: over one hundred fume hoods are needed, and the amount of air that is exhausted by these fume hoods creates a serious shortage of conditioned air for the rest of the building. A new type of system was designed by the engineers, a system capable of continuously changing the air in the laboratories, exhausting through the fume hoods but maintaining a balance with the rest of the building. Nearly one-third of the cost of the project is invested in mechanical, electrical and air-conditioning equipment.

Student areas will include meeting rooms, lounges, club rooms, a "Georgian " office, and a large cafeteria (a Faculty dining room will be included). This cafeteria is located on the 5th floor midway up the building. This creates an "attraction" floor so that students will tend to converge towards this area at various times during the day and evening, thus reducing long vertical trips either up or down. In some high rise buildings, where the cafeteria is located at a lower floor, a heavy and unnecessary demand is placed on the vertical transportation system.

The main portion of the Library (reading rooms and stack area for 157,000 volumes) will remain in the present building, but a Science Library (30,000 volumes) and a Freshman Library (20,000 volumes) will be located in the new building, with reading rooms on each floor.

The public areas of the building, lobby, corridors, exhibition halls, etc. will be decorated with taste making use as much as possible of the texture and appearance of the building-materials rather than covering the walls with a surface treatment.

There are many more aspects of the Henry F. Hall building that are interesting and unique; this efficient building has no parallel elsewhere in Canada, and Sir George Williams University is confident that with its extended facilities it will be able to carry on the important responsibility it has in the education of young men and women in the Montreal area.

Further information may be obtained from J.P. Pétolas, Director of Development Sir George Williams University, Montreal, Quebec.